

WASHINGTON, DC - Today the Department of Defense notified Congress of its intent to pursue a multiyear purchasing agreement for F/A-18E/F/G Super Hornets, in response to the so-called "Akin Amendment" that gave them the authority to do so. Congressman Todd Akin (R-MO), Ranking Member of the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Seapower and Expeditionary Forces, released the following statement in response.

"The Navy and the DoD have made a great decision. I commend Secretary Gates and Secretary Mabus for seeing the light and moving forward with a multiyear contract. A multiyear contract for F-18's saves the Navy and taxpayers over half a billion dollars, provides stability for the workforce in St. Louis, and is an important insurance policy as the Navy faces a large strike fighter shortfall. It is encouraging to see the Navy and DoD come to their senses on this issue, after I have spent two years arguing that a multiyear contract made sense on all fronts.

"Our aircraft carriers are one of our nation's most powerful tools for extending presence and promoting peace around the world. Unfortunately, aircraft carriers are not very effective without strike fighters on board. This multiyear is the first step toward addressing the Navy's fighter shortfall, but more needs to be done. Super Hornets are fantastic planes that provide amazing capabilities for our Navy and are the most affordable fighter aircraft the DoD is currently buying. The DoD should consider using the fantastic price provided by the multiyear contract to buy additional planes to reduce the Navy's fighter gap."

Congressman Akin has been championing an F/A-18 multiyear contract for over two years as something that benefits taxpayers, the Navy and the St. Louis region. In 2008, Akin inserted language into the defense authorization act requiring the Department of Defense to report to Congress on the potential cost savings of a multiyear contract for F/A-18's. In 2009, Congressman Akin successfully added an amendment to the defense authorization act giving

the Navy the authority to enter into a multiyear contract for F/A-18's.